Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties number: WI-220

Name: MD353 over Bunt Mill Branch

The bridge referenced herein was inventoried by the Maryland State Highway Administration as part of the Historic Bridge Inventory, and SHA provided the Trust with eligibility determinations in February 2001. The Trust accepted the Historic Bridge Inventory on April 3, 2001. The bridge received the following determination of eligibility.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

Eligibility Recommended ___X___ Eligibility Not Recommended _____

Criteria: ___A ___B ___C ___D Considerations: ___A ___B ___C ___D ___E ___F ___G __None

Comments: _____

_____

_____

Reviewer, OPS: _Anne E. Bruder_____ Date: __3 April 2001____

Reviewer, NR Program: __Peter E. Kurtze_____ Date: __3 April 2001____

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC BRIDGES MHT No. WI-220
HISTORIC BRIDGE INVENTORY
MARYLAND STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION/
MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

SHA Bridge No. 22018 **Bridge name** Burnt Mill Branch

LOCATION:
Street/Road name and number [facility carried] MD RT 353

City/town Pittsville **Vicinity** X

County Wicomico

This bridge projects over: Road ___ **Railway**__ **Water** X__ **Land** ____

Ownership: State __X___ **County** __ **Municipal** _____ **Other** _____

HISTORIC STATUS:
Is the bridge located within a designated historic district? Yes _____ **No** X_____
National Register-listed district ____ **National Register-determined-eligible district** __
Locally-designated district _____ **Other** _____

Name of district _____

BRIDGE TYPE:
Timber Bridge _____:
Beam Bridge _____ **Truss -Covered** ___ **Trestle** ____ **Timber-And-Concrete** ___

Stone Arch Bridge __

Metal Truss Bridge _

Movable Bridge ____:
Swing _____ **Bascule Single Leaf** __ **Bascule Multiple Leaf** _____
Vertical Lift _ **Retractile** _____ **Pontoon** _____

Metal Girder _____:
Rolled Girder _____ **Rolled Girder Concrete Encased** _____
Plate Girder _____ **Plate Girder Concrete Encased** _____

Metal Suspension ___

Metal Arch __

Metal Cantilever ____

Concrete X__:
Concrete Arch_____ **Concrete Slab**__X__ **Concrete Beam** ____ **Rigid Frame** _____
Other _____ **Type Name** _____

DESCRIPTION:

Setting: Urban _____ **Small town** _____ **Rural** X

Describe Setting: Bridge No. 22018 carries State Route 353 over Burnt Mill Branch. Water flows under the bridge from west to east. The bridge is approximately 2 miles north of the village of Pittsville and is surrounded by farms and a few modern houses.

Describe Superstructure and Substructure:

Bridge No. 22018 is a 20' single-span concrete slab structure carrying Maryland Route 353 over Burnt Mill Branch. The total bridge length is 22'. The structure was built in 1934 according to 1930 standardized State bridge plans. It has a clear roadway of 30'. The slab rests on concrete abutments. The concrete open parapets are capped with articulated concrete coping stones and include decorative detailing and end blocks. They are integral with the bridge. The flared wingwalls are ornamented with molded chamfering.

Discuss Major Alterations:

No major alterations have been made on this bridge.

HISTORY:

WHEN was the bridge built: 1934

This date is: Actual X **Estimated** _

Source of date: Plaque _____ **Design plans** _____ **County bridge files/inspection form** _____

Other (specify) SHA Bridge Inventory

WHY was the bridge built?

The need for a more efficient transportation network and load capacity in the decades following World War I.

WHO was the designer?

State Highway Administration

WHO was the builder?

State Highway Administration

WHY was the bridge altered?

Guardrails were added to increase road width and improve road safety.

Was the bridge built as part of an organized bridge-building campaign?

As part of an effort by the State to increase load capacity on secondary roads during the 1930's

SURVEYOR/HISTORIAN ANALYSIS:

This bridge may have National Register significance for its association with:

A - Events ____ **B- Person** _____

C- Engineering/architectural character _____

Was the bridge constructed in response to significant events in Maryland or local history? No X

Reinforced concrete slab bridges are a twentieth century structure type, easily adapted to the need for expedient engineering solutions. Reinforced concrete technology developed rapidly in the early twentieth century with early recognition of the potential for standardized design. The

first U.S. attempt to standardize concrete design specifications came in 1903-04 with the formation of the Joint Committee on Concrete and Reinforced Concrete of the American Society of Civil Engineers.

Maryland's road and bridge improvement programs mirrored economic cycles. The first road improvement program of the State Roads Commission was a 7 year program, starting with the Commission's establishment in 1908 and ending in 1915. Due to World War I, the period from 1916 -1920 was one of relative inactivity; only roads of first priority were built. Truck traffic resulting from war-related factories and military installations generated new, heavy traffic unanticipated by the builders of the early road system. From 1920 to 1929, numerous highway improvements occurred in response to the increase in Maryland motor vehicles from 103,000 in 1920 to 320,000 in 1929, with emphasis on the secondary system of feeder roads which moved traffic from the primary roads built before World War I. After World War I, Maryland's bridge system also was appraised as too narrow and structurally inadequate for the increasing traffic, with plans for an expanded bridge program to be handled by the Bridge Division, set up in 1920. In 1920 under Chapter 508 of the Acts of 1920 the State issued a bond of $3,000,000.00 for road construction; the primary purpose of these monies was to meet the state obligations involving the construction of rural post roads. The secondary purpose of these monies was to fund [with an equal sum from the counties] the building of lateral roads. The number of hard surfaced roads on the state system grew from 2000 in 1920 to 3200 in 1930. By 1930, Maryland's primary system had become inadequate to the huge freight trucks and volume of passenger cars in use, with major improvements occurring in the late 1930s. Most improvements to local roads waited until the years after World War II.

With a diverse topographical domain encompassing numerous small and large crossings, Maryland engineers quickly recognized the need for expedient design and construction.

In the early years, there was a need to replace the numerous single lane timber bridges. Walter Wilson Crosby, Chief Engineer stated in 1906, "The general plan has been to replace these [wood bridges] with pipe culverts or concrete bridges and thus forever do way with the further expense of the maintenance of expensive and dangerous wooden structures". Within a few years, readily constructed standardized bridges of concrete were being built throughout the state.

The creation of standard plans and a description of their use was first announced in the 1912-15 Reports of the State Roads Commission whereby bridges spanning up to 36 feet were to use standardized designs.

Published on a single sheet, the 1912 Standard Plans included those structures that were amenable to such an approach: slab spans, (deck) girder spans, box culverts, box bridges, abutments, and piers (State Roads Commission 1912). Slab spans, with lengths of 6 to 16 feet in two foot increments, featured a solid parapet that was integrated into the slab, with a roadway of 22 feet.

In the Report for the years 1916-1919, a revision of the standard plans was noted:

> During the four years covered by this report, it has been found necessary to revise our standard plans for culverts and bridges, to take care of the increased tonnage which they have been forced to carry. Army cantonments...increased their operations several hundred per cent, and the brunt of the enormous truck traffic resulting therefrom, was borne by the State Roads of Maryland. In addition to these war activities, freight motor lines from

> Baltimore to Washington, Philadelphia, New York, and various points throughout Maryland, and the weight of many of these trucks when loaded, was in excess of the loads for which our early bridges were designed (State Roads Commission 1920:56).

Published on separate sheets, the new standard plans (State Roads Commission 1919) for slab bridges reveal that the major changes was an increase in roadway width from 22 feet to 24 feet and a redesign of the reinforcement. The slab spans continued to feature solid parapets integrated into the span. The range of span lengths remained 6 to 16 feet, but the next year (1920) witnessed the issue of a supplemental plan for a 20 foot long slab span (State Roads Commission 1920).

The 1924 standard plans remained in effect until 1930, when the roadway width for all standard plan bridges was increased to 27 feet in order to accommodate the increasing demands of automobile and truck traffic (State Roads Commission 1930). The range of span lengths remained the same, but there were some changes designed to increase load bearing capacities. The reinforcing bars were increased in thickness. Visually, the 1930 design can be distinguished from its predecessors by the pierced concrete railing that was introduced at this time.

Three years later, in 1933, a new set of standard plans was introduced (State Roads Commission 1933). This time, their preparation was not announced in the Report; new standard plans were by this time nothing special - they had indeed become standard. Once again accommodating the ever-increasing demands of traffic, the roadway width was increased, this time to 30 feet. The slab span's reinforcing bars remained the same diameter but were placed closer together to achieve still more load bearing capacity.

A system of standard nomenclature for plans was introduced at this time: span type was indicated by a two-letter designator followed by span length and the year of the plan. Thus, CS-18-33 indicates an 18 foot concrete slab of the 1933 standard plan design; CG-36-33 was a 36 foot concrete girder (T-beam) of the same year. The inclusion of the year designator gave ready access to design details for each bridge and indicates that the State Roads Commission anticipated revisions to standard plans.

When the bridge was built and/or given a major alteration, did it have a significant impact on the growth and development of the area?
There is no evidence to suggest that the construction of this bridge effected the growth or development of this area. This is rural area the nature of which has changed little during the past century.

Is the bridge located in an area which may be eligible for historic designation and would the bridge add to or detract from the historic/visual character of the potential district?
This bridge is not located in an area which may be eligible for historic designation.

Is the bridge a significant example of its type?
This bridge was built according to 1930 standardized State bridge plans.

Does the bridge retain integrity of important elements described in Context Addendum?
This bridge retains a high degree of integrity.

Is the bridge a significant example of the work of a manufacturer, designer and/or engineer?
It is a significant example of a 1930s standardized concrete slab bridge.

Should the bridge be given further study before an evaluation of its significance is made?
No further evaluation is necessary to determine National Register significance. However, additional research concerning the history of this bridge and its relationship to the surrounding landscape may be useful in providing a more complete picture of the bridge's background.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

County inspection/bridge files __ SHA Inspection/bridge files X

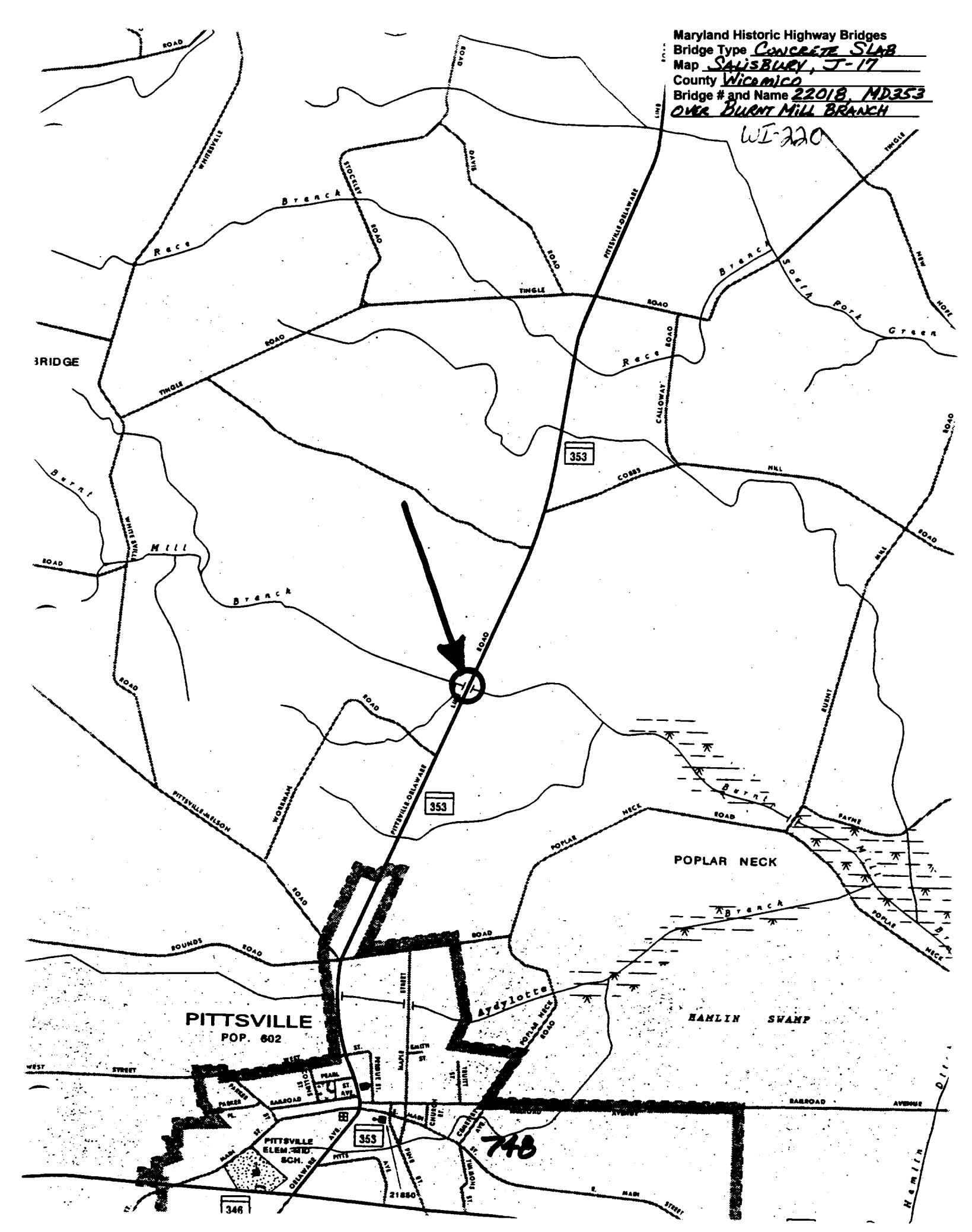
Lake, Griffin, and Stevenson, 1877 Atlases and other Early Maps of the Eastern Shore of Maryland, Philadelphia, 1877.

Telephone conversation with Jim Miller, County Engineer for Wicomico County, August 11, 1995.

SURVEYOR/SURVEY INFORMATION:

Date bridge recorded 8/11/95

Name of surveyor Daniel Moriarty
Organization/Address P.A.C. Spero & Company, 40 W. Chesapeake Avenue, Suite 412, Baltimore, Maryland 21204
Phone number 410-296-1635 **FAX number** 410-296-1670


Maryland Historic Highway Bridges
Bridge Type CONCRETE SLAB
Map SALISBURY, J-17
County WICOMICO
Bridge # and Name 22018, MD353
OVER BURNT MILL BRANCH
WI-220
PITTSVILLE
POP. 602
POPLAR NECK
HAMLIN SWAMP
353
346
748

WI 320

WJ 220

2 of 4

WJ-220

3 OF 4

WI 220

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